

U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
PRESCRIBED BURNING PLAN

Stillwater NWR
National Wildlife Refuge

Stillwater Point Reservoir
Unit

Prepared By: Rob Bundy/Bill Henry Date: 10/28/96

Reviewed By: _____ Date: _____
Dan Walsworth Refuge Manager

Reviewed By: _____ Date: _____
Robert Flores Asst. Refuge Manager

Reviewed By: _____ Date: _____
Regional Fire Management Coordinator

The approved Prescribed Fire Plan constitutes the authority to burn. No one has the authority to burn without an approved plan or in a manner not in compliance with the approved plan. Actions taken in compliance with the approved Prescribed Fire Plan will be fully supported.

Approved By: _____ Date: _____
Assistant Regional Director
Refuges and Wildlife

ANNUAL PRESCRIBED BURNING PLAN

Station: Stillwater NWR

Name of Area: Stillwater Point Reservoir

Specific Portion of Above: Central 2/3 (app. 1200 ac.) of wetland management unit.

Legal Description: T. 19N R. 31E Sec.(s) 15,20,21 County: Churchill

Physical Features: Central segment of management unit (see accompanying map) has become overgrown with dense, rank, monotypic growth of narrow leaved cattail (*Typha domingensis*).

Vegetative Cover Types: (Species, Height, Density, etc.) Unit is primarily comprised of late successional plant associations including *Typha domingensis*, *Typha domingensis/Scirpus acutus*, and *Tamarix ramossissima*. Affected area vegetative cover percentages are as follows:

Vegetation Type	Acres	%	Fuel Model
<u><i>Typha domingensis</i></u>	<u>900</u>	<u>75.0</u>	<u></u>
<u><i>Scirpus acutus</i></u>	<u>70</u>	<u>5.8</u>	<u></u>
<u><i>Tamarix ramossissima</i></u>	<u>40</u>	<u>3.3</u>	<u></u>
<u>Emergent/Open water/Other</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>15.8</u>	<u></u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>1200</u>	<u>99.9</u>	<u></u>

Estimates are based on aerial observation of Stillwater Point Reservoir.

Primary Resource Objectives: To return vegetative coverage to early successional, more productive conditions (i.e. to allow vegetation to return to "hemi-marsh" conditions more suitable for waterfowl brood use).

Specific Objectives of Burn: To reduce extant coverage of *Typha domingensis* to 20% of current to provide mud flat conditions for spring migration of shorebird populations, allow new growth of native annuals (e.g. *Bassia hyssopifolia*) for migration and wintering foods for waterfowl, and to set back succession for eventual reformation of "hemi-marsh" (50% emergent/50% open water) conditions for waterbird nesting cover and waterfowl brood use. Ideally, vegetative height will remain at water level (approximately 2") to facilitate regrowth of emergent species.

Historical Fire Occurrence: Details of burn history are lacking; however, periodic burning of residual vegetation during wetland drying cycles has occurred related to anthropogenic sources (i.e. Paiute/Shoshone Indian Tribe) and natural lightening strikes. This unit was recently burned in 1992 to control salt cedar encroachment following sustained drought. In the absence of biological controls (e.g. muskrat: *Ondatra zibethicus*), burning appears to be the most viable and desirable option to set back succession in wetland management units. Periodic removal of dense, residual vegetation is necessary to productive wetland cycles.

PRE-BURN PLANNING AND ACTION

Site Preparation: (what, when, how, & who) At present, water from Stillwater Point Reservoir is being distributed both to the Canvasback Gun Club and refuge wetland management units. This will result in drawdown conditions (i.e. 1 or 2 inches of standing water) more suitable to the proposed burn (i.e. sufficient soil moisture to reduce generated heat and associated "peat" fires). The proposed burn area is bounded by sparsely vegetated upland areas to the north, south, and east; however, backfires or some form of mechanical treatment may be required to offset the chance of fire spread to upland areas. Adherence to optimal weather standards for the proposed burn should minimize the chance of fire spread. Pre-burn action will be facilitated by the Stillwater NWR biological staff and maintenance crew.

Safety Considerations: Weather conditions will be monitored to ensure ideal conditions on the day of the proposed burn. Low fuel cover on adjacent upland areas should minimize the possibility of fire spread beyond the proposed burn area; however, escape routes, vehicles, and a fire truck will be identified prior to and available on the day of the proposed burn to facilitate emergency evacuation of personnel. The local fire department and sheriff's office will be contacted and will be available prior to burn. No special safety considerations have been identified as the area is not available for public access.

Media Contacts: Ideally, the proposed burn will be low profile; however, the burn does allow for a potential public relations opportunity to help explain how we use fire to manage wetland management units. Potential contacts include:

1. Monie Byers	Lahontan Valley News	Fallon
2. Mike McGinnis	KVLV Radio	Fallon
3. John Trent	Reno Gazette Journal	Reno
4. Larry Muchowski	Channel 8 News	Reno
5. Paul Bean	Outdoor Nevada	Las Vegas

The Fallon news media will be advised to help inform the local community as to our intentions.

Special Constraints and Considerations: The size of the proposed burn area and the amount of residual vegetation (fuel) do warrant consideration of the number of personnel required to safely administer the proposed burn. Available support staff (e.g. rural fire department) should be available for emergency loss of fire control.

Communication and Coordination: The local fire department and refuge office dispatch will be notified prior to the proposed burn. Two teams of refuge personnel and the refuge fire truck will be in contact by shortwave radio on a frequency of 163.075 mhz. Other frequencies of concern that will be monitored include:

1. Nevada Division of Wildlife	155.190
2. Churchill County Sheriff	151.475

Interagency Coordination: The proposed burn area is relatively isolated and falls completely within Stillwater NWR boundaries; however, adjacent lands to the south, east, and southwest are either privately owned, administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), or managed by the Truckee Carson Irrigation District (Diagonal Canal). All adjacent concerns will be notified prior to

Type of Fire:	Strip flank fires	
Rate of Spread:	3	110
Intensity:	30	1400
Flame Length:	2	13
Heat/Unit Area:		
Energy Release Component:		

Ignition Technique: Driptorch to backfire along firebreaks (located at north and east edges of proposed burn area) and strip flank firing to burn out area.

Prescribed Fire Organization: As previously stated, the proposed burn will be conducted by Stillwater NWR personnel including:

Burn Boss:	Bill Henry
Ignition Specialist:	Delvin Lee
Ignition Crew	Rob Bundy Bill Henry Don DeLong
Holding Specialist:	Bob Henderson
Holding Crew	Ernie Lantto
Weather Observer:	Rob Bundy
Dispatcher:	Caroline Johnson

Don Dearborn
Chris
2 fire technicians

Crew briefing will immediately precede the proposed burn to ensure that personnel involved are completely aware of their particular responsibilities.

SMOKE MANAGEMENT:

Distance and Direction from Smoke Sensitive Areas: The proposed burn will be conducted approximately 7 miles NE of the Fallon Naval Air Station (NAS) and 13 miles ENE of Fallon.

Necessary Transport Wind Direction and Elevation: Wind direction must be either south or west to ensure that smoke sensitive areas are not affected. The preferred wind direction would be SSW to carry the fire across the proposed burn area. The desired wind direction would carry smoke either into the Stillwater Mountain Range (W or SW) or into the Stillwater NWR (S). Both areas see relatively low public visitation during the proposed burn period. Elevation is inconsequential.

Visibility Hazards: County road 1/4 mile west of unit.

Actions to Reduce Visibility Hazards: Ensure that wind direction is appropriate.

Residual Smoke Problems: Considerable smoke will be created from the proposed burn; however, the fire should be relatively short-lived and soil moisture will be high enough to eliminate peat fires. Residual smoke should not be a problem.

FUNDING AND PERSONNEL:

	Equipment & Supplies	Labor	Overtime	Staff Days	Total Cost
Administration: (planning)	na	100\$	na	1	100\$
Site Preparation:	na	na	na	na	0\$
Ignition and Control:	150\$	300\$	0\$	4	450\$
Travel/Per Diem:	na	na	na	na	0\$
Monitoring/Eval.:	na	100\$	na	1	100\$
Total:	150\$	500\$	0\$	6	650\$

BURN DAY ACTIVITIES:

Public/Media Contacts: Media contacts were covered previously.

Crews and Equipment Assignments:

Burn Boss/Manager	-	Bill Henry
Ignition Specialist	-	Delvin Lee
Ignition Crew	-	Rob Bundy
		Bill Henry
		Don DeLong
Holding Specialist	-	Bob Henderson
Holding Crew	-	Ernie Lantto
Weather Observer	-	Rob Bundy
Dispatcher	-	Caroline Johnson

Crew Briefing Points: A tailgate briefing will occur prior to ensure that everyone is aware and comfortable with their responsibilities.

Ignition Technique: Backfires will be completed either early on the day of the proposed burn or the day immediately prior to. Initial ignition of flanking fires will be completed by Rob Bundy, Bill Henry, and Don DeLong.

Personnel Escape Plan:

Holding and Control:

Contingency Plan for Escaped Fire:

Mop up and Patrol:

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